



# Brownfields 2005 Grant Fact Sheet

## *Merced Redevelopment Agency, CA*

### EPA Brownfields Program

EPA's Brownfields Program empowers states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic development to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield site is real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. On January 11, 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act. Under the Brownfields Law, EPA provides financial assistance to eligible applicants through four competitive grant programs: assessment grants, revolving loan fund grants, cleanup grants, and job training grants. Additionally, funding support is provided to state and tribal response programs through a separate mechanism.

### Community Description

The Merced Redevelopment Agency was selected to receive a brownfields assessment grant. With a population of 63,893, Merced is the largest population center in Merced County, but only five counties in California have income levels lower than that of Merced County. Unemployment frequently exceeds 15 percent, and approximately 40 percent of the population is dependent on some form of public assistance. Merced is the sixth most ethnically diverse community in the United States. Hmong refugees joined Anglo and Hispanic populations in Merced during the 1980s, and now constitute about 12 percent of the population. These new populations have



### Assessment Grant

New  
2005

\$200,000 for petroleum

EPA has selected the Merced Redevelopment Agency for a brownfields assessment grant. Grant funds will be used to conduct Phase I and II site assessments at the former Simpson's Cleaners site in a one-block area of downtown Merced. Grant funds also will be used to assess human health risks, and support community outreach activities.

### Contacts

For further information, including specific grant contacts, additional grant information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at: [www.epa.gov/brownfields](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields).

EPA Region 9 Brownfields Team

415-972-3188

[http://www.epa.gov/region09/waste/brown/  
index.html](http://www.epa.gov/region09/waste/brown/index.html)

Grant Recipient: Merced Redevelopment Agency,  
CA  
209-385-6827

The cooperative agreement for this grant has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.

settled in South and Central Merced, where the city is focused on revitalizing a one-block area of downtown that contains vacant land and older development. The target site, the former Simpson's Cleaners, included a dry cleaning facility on the north side of the property. Because a gas station may have operated on its southern boundary, petroleum contamination is suspected at the site. Merced's central area also has had significant perchloroethylene contamination and hydrocarbon pollution. Redevelopment will address human health risks that are especially important to low-income residents, create jobs through private investment, and remove environmental uncertainty.